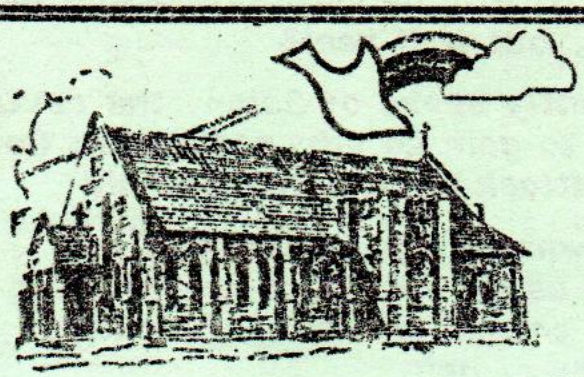

St. MARK'S CHURCH NEWS

OCTOBER 1986

A QUESTION OF REALITY

One of the interesting sidelights of the letter I wrote to the majority of those on our Parish Roll, concerning the critical problems facing our Church, was the reaction I received to certain statements in that letter.

Numbers of people, including some of the Parish Council, and other prominent figures in the Northbridge community, were very upset by my references to a spiritual war between Christ and Satan, and the fact that those who do not know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour are "on their way to hell". These comments were variously described as "Medaeval", "childish", "threatening", "offensive", and "quite out of place." The view was expressed that such ideas are not a part of most people's thinking, even their religious thinking, and will only tend to drive people further away from the Church.

This is serious. We not only have a crisis situation with the church, we have a credibility gap between the Rector and members of the Parish. What, then, should I do? Should I, as has often been suggested, avoid saying things that are negative and might upset people? Should I stop talking about such things as hell and the devil? Should I simply concentrate on the positive aspects of the Gospel?

That is certainly the policy followed in other churches. And it is successful, if one can judge by the increase in numbers of people attending. But, unfortunately, it leaves us with a question of reality. Is it realistic to only talk of positive helpful things? Is it realistic to avoid any references to hell or Satan? Does this give us a real picture

of the world in which we live? Does this give us a real answer to the everyday life situations that we face? It may be comfortable and non-threatening; it may make people feel good, but is it real?

Jesus didn't think so! He frequently spoke of Satan, the devil, as a real and powerful adversary, seeking to gain an advantage over God's people. He described His ministry as an attack upon Satan and his power. He also spoke much of Hell, and warned His followers of its dangers. Jesus spoke as much about Hell as He did about heaven, and stated quite clearly that those who did not choose to commit their lives to Him, would inevitably suffer the torments of hell.

These things were certainly very real for Jesus, but can they still be regarded as real in this sophisticated technological age? Are they not merely superstitious myths of a bygone era? Many people were saying that, 30 or 40 years ago. Not so many are saying it to-day. For we are seeing more and more real evidence of the activity of Satan and his demonic powers in our community. Not only are the numbers of blatant Satan-worshippers growing in our community and a large proportion of modern rock music is openly dedicated to Satan. Not only is there an enormous growth in occult practices, especially amongst young people, but there is growing evidence of the presence of demonic activity behind many of the illnesses, personality problems and difficulties that are encountered in everyday life.

It is somewhat ironic that on the Willisee program last Thursday, the day the Parish Council met, there was a documentary about a boy being delivered from a demon of Freemasonry. I have personally witnessed and been involved in such deliverances. And I have seen people being released into a new freedom and joy and power in their Christian lives, and a real, personal experience of God. This is what is real. This is what the gospel is all about. This is the message that Jesus and the apostles proclaimed. I cannot preach anything different.

JOHN DAVIES

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HEALING SERVICE Our monthly Healing Service will be to-night at 7.15pm. Anyone interested in this Ministry of Scriptural Healing, or who has a particular need for prayer, is most welcome to attend. The Holy Spirit has been doing some great things amongst us recently.

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N E W S

ALL HANDS ON DECK! Nothing to do with the Navy celebrations, but next Saturday, 11th October, there will be Working Bees for both the Parish and the Kindergarten. A list of jobs that need doing around the Church is available. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

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DIOCESAN SYNOD meets this week and next. The two matters most likely to stir up interest are one motion concerning the propriety of Christians being members of Freemasonry, and another opposing united activities with Roman Catholics. Please pray for our representatives: Shane Marshall, Emil Mackertich, and John Davies.

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MAKE AND MEND will be late this month. Because of the public holiday, it will meet on Monday, 13th October, at 10am. at Elsie's house, 29 Namoi Road. New helpers are always welcome. This group has a valuable ministry in making and repairing all sorts of things for various voluntary agencies.

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PRAYER FOR NORTHBRIDGE. *The Third monthly gathering of Christians from all denominations, who are moved to pray for God's blessing on our suburb, will be on Sunday, 19th October, at 2.30pm in the Uniting Church. Everyone is most welcome. The presence of God has been very powerfully felt in the meetings held so far.*

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MONTHLY THURSDAY COMMUNION

We welcome all who can come to this Service, particularly those who are unable to attend our regular services, also members of other churches. Transport can be arranged: 'phone Fred on 95 2442, or Elsie on 958 1429. A light luncheon is served after the Service for those who can stay. 16th October!!

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C.M.S. PRAYER NOTES for the month of October are on the back table. Please take a copy, and use it.

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DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN LIVING

It is almost time to start this 8-week video programme that can revolutionise your Christian life. If you are interested in learning how to relate what you believe to how you live, see Stephen Toon or John Davies as soon as possible. Meeting times will be arranged to suit you.

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OPEN DOORS is our PROJECT FOR THE MONTH of October. This is a non-demoninational organisation working to assist the churches in countries behind the Iron and Bamboo curtains. It has been mightily blessed by God in smuggling Bibles into these countries. The founder of Open Doors, Brother Andrew, will be speaking at a public meeting in the State Theatre on Saturday, 15th November at 7.30pm. Gifts to the work of Open Doors may be made through the missionary side of our Duplex envelopes. Your prayer support is even more vital.

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PRAYER MINISTRY.. Following the tremendous response to the Day of Prayer last Thursday, the Rector will be available in the Church every Friday morning from 7 am to 12 noon, for any who wish to join him for prayer, or who desire personal ministry. The church is always open for private prayer and meditation.

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RENEWAL FELLOWSHIP. There will be a time of praise, prayer and ministry in the Rectory next Saturday, 11th October at 7.00 pm. All those interested in knowing more of Jesus, and the renewing work of His Holy Spirit, regardless of denomination, are most welcome.

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KINDERGARTEN SQUARE DANCE. Anyone who has been to one of these in the past will be queing for tickets. The date is Saturday, 25th October, in St. Mark's Hall. Tickets are $20 each, obtainable through the Kindergarten.

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Don't worry about what you do not understand of the Bible.
Worry about what you do understand but do not live by.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CRIME PREVENTION SEMINAR. You will have to be early on Tuesday, 28th October, if you want to get a seat in St. Mark's Hall, before this meeting starts at 7.30pm. The response to the inaugural meeting for this programme was overwhelming.

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A BIG THANK-YOU to those who minister to us each week by providing and arranging the flowers in the church. Another big thank-you, too, to those who help with the Communion Table each week, and to those who look after the Morning Tea. There is always room for more helpers in these ministries.

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ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS --

TRAINING FOR WAR

This is the theme of the Morning Sermons during October. We are in a battle, whether we like it or not. Christians are so often ineffective or overcome because they have not been trained. Learn how to be a winner.

Sunday, 5th The Christian's Enemies
Sunday, 12th The Christian's Weapons
Sunday, 19th The Christian's Battle-Readiness
Sunday, 26th The Christian's Victory

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THANKSGIVING DAY. Start preparing now for our great Day of Thanksgiving on Sunday, 9th November. There will be a Thanksgiving Service at 10am. when we thank God for the blessings of the past year. The speaker will be Canon Jim Glennon of the Cathedral Healing Ministry. There will be a special project to collect food for the Careforce ministry to the needy families of our city.

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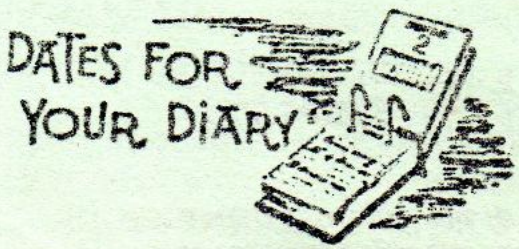

MAKE & MEND: Monday, 13th October
THURSDAY COMMUNION: 16th October
PRAYER FOR NORTHBRIDGE: 19th October
KINDY SQUARE DANCE: 25th October
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH: 28th October
THANKSGIVING DAY: Sunday, 9th Nov.
BROTHER ANDREW: Saturday, 15th Nov.

ST. MARK'S FAMILY CHURCH

Cr. Tunks Street and Malacoota Road,
Northbridge. 2063.

RECTOR The Rev. John E. Davies

17 Tunks Street Northbridge: 958 5794

SUNDAY, 5th OCTOBER, 1986. TWENTY-SEVENTH ORDINARY SUNDAY

PROJECT FOR MONTH: OPEN DOORS

8.00am HOLY COMMUNION: (p.114) *The Christian's Enemies*
Epistle: Ephesians 6:10-20 (p.1093/LP1765)
Gospel: Luke 10: 1-20 (p. 966/LP1561)
10.00am SUNDAY SCHOOL
10.00am HOLY COMMUNION: (p.134) *The Christian's Enemies*
Epistle and Gospel: as above
11.15am MORNING TEA
5.30pm YOUTH FELLOWSHIP
7.15pm HEALING SERVICE: *The Willingness of Christ*
Lesson: Luke 5: 12-16 (p. 958/LP1548)

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DURING THE WEEK

Tuesday - Thursday DIOCESAN SYNOD: Please Pray
Tuesday, 7.30pm PARISH PRAYER MEETING: Vestry
Friday, 10.00am PLAY GROUP: Hall
Saturday, 9.00am PARISH WORKING BEE
KINDERGARTEN WORKING BEE
7.00pm PRAISE & PRAYER: Rectory

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NEXT SUNDAY Flowers: Mrs Westwood

8.00am HOLY COMMUNION: (p.134) *The Christian's Weapons*
Epistle: 2 Corinthians 10: 1-18 (p.1080/LP1746)
Gospel: John 18:28-37 (p.1009/LP1630)
10.00am SUNDAY SCHOOL
10.00am MORNING PRAYER: (p.18) *The Christian's Weapons*
First Lesson: Isaiah 2: 1-22 (p. 636/LP1031)
Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 10: 1-18 (1080/LP1746)
11.15am MORNING TEA
5.30pm YOUTH FELLOWSHIP
7.15pm HOLY COMMUNION:
Epistle: 2 Timothy 1:6-14 (p.1111/LP1792)
Gospel: Luke 17: 5-10 (p. 976/LP1576)

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Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.
Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.